

Morgans Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117363
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	312587
Inspection date	16 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Joseph Crawley
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Dutt
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2004
School address	Morgans Road Hertford Hertfordshire SG13 8DR
Telephone number	01992 582162
Fax number	01992 509499

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	16 June 2008
Inspection number	312587

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the current rate of progress for pupils in Key Stage 2 and whether Year 6 pupils are on track to attain their targets; how well information and communication technology (ICT) resources are used to support learning in lessons; and how well subject leaders contribute to the school's provision and standards. Evidence was gathered from records of pupils' attainment, samples of pupils' past work, observations in lessons and around the school, meetings with staff, governors and pupils, and an analysis of responses to the parents' questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspection found no evidence to contradict the school's own judgements given in its self-evaluation and these have been included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

Morgans is much larger than most primary schools. It has a Nursery for 39 children all of whom attend on a part-time basis. The school has a large and spacious site and there are two main buildings that are separated by the sports field. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. All the pupils speak fluent English. The school holds the following awards: Investors in People, Healthy Schools, the Sports Active Mark, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Financial Management Standard in Schools, Hertfordshire Quality Standard for Foundation Stage Provision.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The pupils achieve well and make good progress in their personal and academic development. This is because teaching is good and the pupils benefit from the wide range of interesting activities and the good quality care provided for them. Staff are particularly vigilant in ensuring that the pupils' safety and well being are protected and all safeguarding regulations are met in full.

Children enter the school with standards that are similar to expected levels, and by the time that they leave at the end of Year 6, they attain standards that are significantly above average. Because provision is good for pupils that are vulnerable, their progress matches that of their classmates. Standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 have not been as high as they could have been and progress, though satisfactory, has dipped. The school is focusing strongly on addressing this comparative weakness, which resulted from pupils not using and applying their mathematical knowledge well enough in practical situations. New initiatives, such as training for teachers, providing weekly problem solving activities and closely tailoring pupils' targets to identified needs are starting to pay dividends. However, there is still a legacy of some under-achievement particularly by higher attaining pupils. As a result, even though current Year 5 pupils are on track to attain equally high standards in mathematics as in English and science, this is not as true of the current Year 6 even though their attainment in other subjects is good. Overall, however, pupils make good progress and are prepared well for their transfer to secondary school.

There is a very good climate for learning in all classes. This is because relationships between adults and pupils are good and staff are skilled in behaviour management. This results in classrooms that have a calm and purposeful atmosphere and reflect the pupils' good enjoyment of lessons and learning. 'Our teachers make learning fun because they don't teach in one specific way, they use different methods and that helps us if we don't understand'. This appreciative comment is typical of those made by pupils. They are also appreciative of the wide range of additional opportunities that are provided for them and they enthuse about the sporting and musical activities available. The curriculum is generally good but is hampered by limitations in computer resources. The school makes good use of a wide range of information and communication technology resources such as digital cameras, robots and the interactive white boards that are in all classrooms. However, there are not enough computers in classrooms for pupils to apply the skills that they learn in lessons in the computer suite.

Most parents are supportive of the school and recognise the school's strengths. One summarised these well when writing, 'Our child is very happy and the friendly, positive culture is excellent. The teachers are not only professional but also very caring in their manner and attitude towards the children'. Some parents, however, said that communication with them is not effective. This was investigated and it was found that the school's communication systems at least match those typically found in other schools. The range of newsletters and opportunities for parents to meet with teachers is similar to most other schools. In some respects, communication is better than usual. For example, the school provides information regarding work to be covered for the term including homework. In addition, senior staff and governors consult parents annually by questionnaire and respond well to parental requests, such as the new 'Governor of the Month' feature which outlines their work. Also in response to parental concerns, a texting system to parents has been introduced.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and they have a keen sense of right and wrong. Consequently behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. Pupils appreciate the prompt and effective way in which any misbehaviour is dealt with by adults. They enjoy taking responsibility whether by being members of the influential children's council, being part of the review of the school's aims or deciding which charities that the school will support.

There has been some improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. It is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. This is because senior staff keep a close watch on lesson quality. The resulting accurate evaluations are used well to improve teaching. For example, it was found that pupils did not have a sufficiently clear view about their progress and what they need to do to improve. Changes were made with teachers ensuring that pupils understood what was expected of them. This has also developed the pupils' sense of independence. Revised systems for tracking pupils' progress were introduced and these are starting to help teachers to develop a more accurate picture of pupils' progress. As part of this improvement, staff have also made their marking of pupils' work clearer and this includes clear targets for pupils' learning. As a result, even the youngest pupils know their targets. Staff now need to embed the use of tracking so that in all classes teachers use these data to monitor pupils' progress more often.

The headteacher continues to provide good leadership. She is supported well by the effective deputy head and leadership team. She has been careful to consult with parents, governors, staff and pupils, and as a result the school has successfully fostered a strong sense of common purpose to which the pupils' best interests are central. Teachers with responsibilities carry out their duties well, and regularly check the school's provision and standards in their subject areas. They make a good contribution to the school's accurate and thorough monitoring and evaluation systems. The headteacher has steered the school well since the previous inspection and the improvements demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are similar to those typically found. Because the provision is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes, children make good progress and achieve well and, by the time that they enter Year 1, a majority attain the expected goals. Many parents commented on how quickly their children settle when starting school and how enthusiastic their children are to attend. This is because levels of care are high and children are given a good range of interesting activities that match their needs well. A good balance is struck between activities that are directed by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. In addition, staff use the outdoor spaces well to support children across all areas of learning. There are good arrangements for checking progress, and assessments are used well to guide staff in planning the next range of activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the good start made to accelerate progress for Key Stage 2 pupils in mathematics with a particular focus on the more able pupils.
- Embed the procedures for tracking pupils' progress in learning.
- Provide more computers to enable pupils to have regular access to this technology during lessons.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Morgans Primary School, Hertford SG13 8DR

Thank you for being so helpful when I came to your school to find out how well you are getting on. I particularly enjoyed hearing your CD of singing. I think it is really good. Mrs Dutt gave me a copy so I listened to it all the way home in my car!

Yours is a good school. There are many things that are good about it and these are the things that I think are the most important.

- You make good progress. By the time that you leave you are better at English and science than pupils in most other schools. Well done!
- Your teachers do a good job. You told me that you enjoy lessons and teaching is good and I agree. You learn well because the teachers give you lots of interesting things to do and they help you when you get stuck.
- All the adults make sure that you are well looked after.
- Your behaviour is good. You enjoy school, feel safe and are very friendly to each other and to visitors.

I know that the school is always trying to get better so I have suggested three things for Mrs Dutt and the governors and staff to do.

- Your teachers are working on ways to help you to make as much progress in mathematics as you do in English and science. I think this is a good idea and I would like your teachers to concentrate in particular on helping those of you who find learning more easy to do better.
- Make sure that the new ways that your teachers have to check your progress are used regularly.
- Provide more computers so that you can use them in the classrooms as well as in the computer suite.

With best wishes Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler Lead inspector